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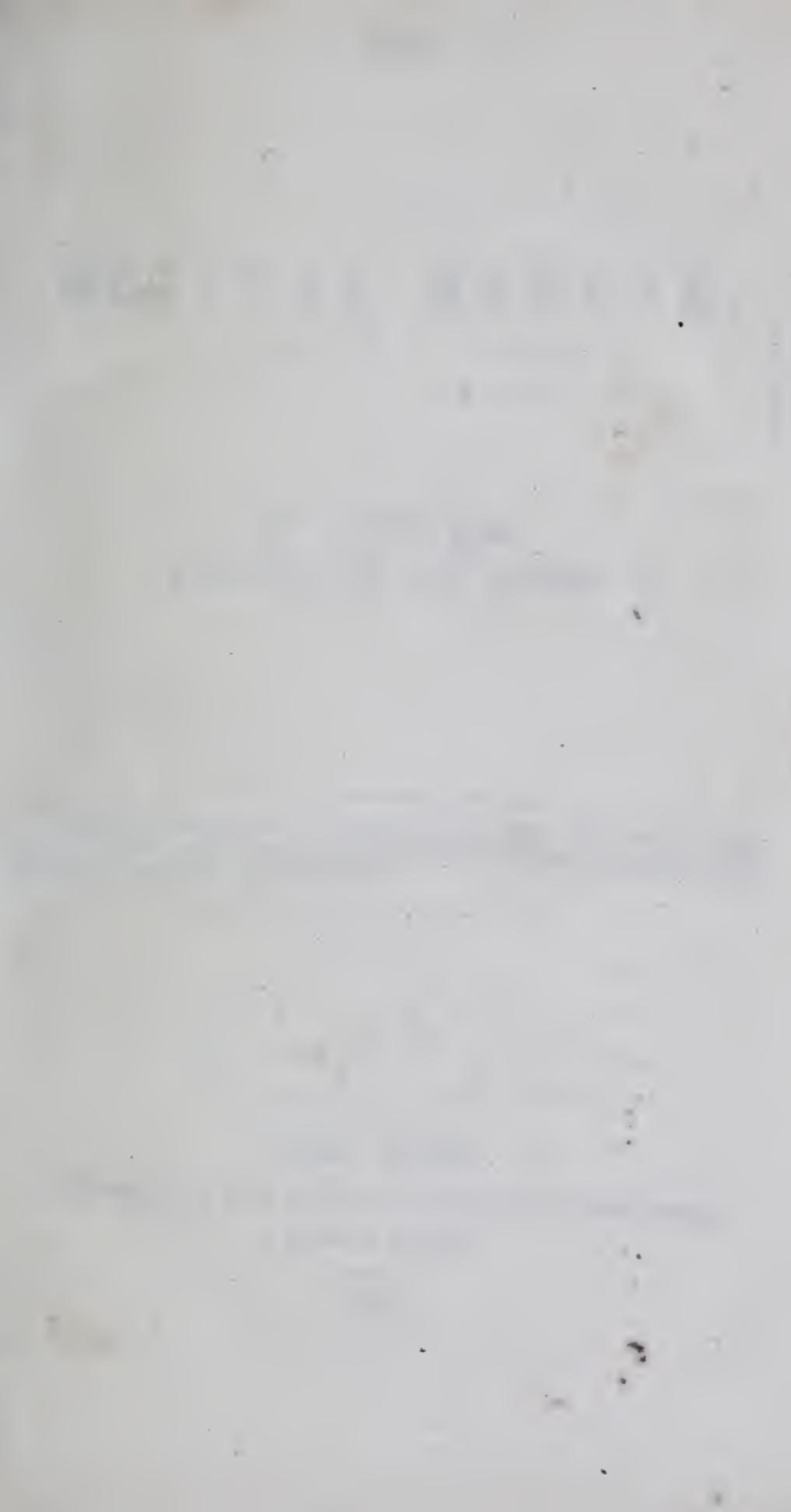
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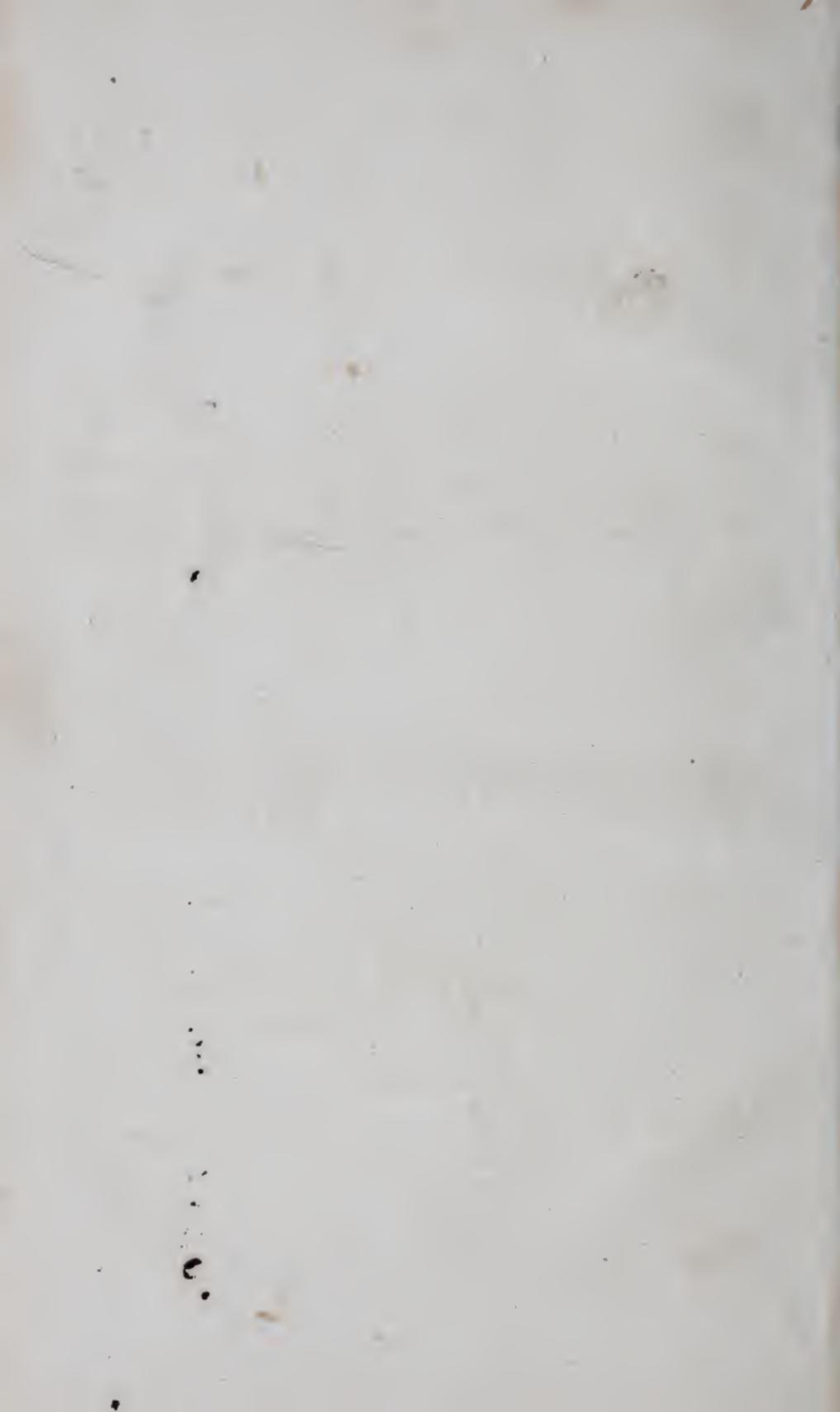
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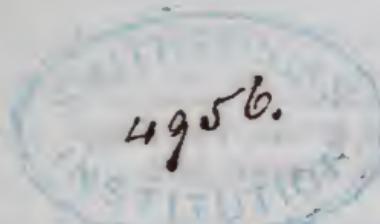
THE

REVIVAL MANUAL.

WESLEYAN

BY LUTHER LEE,
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

“Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.—Acts xiii. 41.



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P R E F A C E .

INFIDELITY assumes a variety of forms; but in none is it more successful and more fatal, than when it appears robed in livery stolen from the Sanctuary, and goes forth as the friend and advocate of religion, and assumes to steady and guide the ark of God. In this form, and with these pretensions, many who design to be honest Christians, are deceived by it, and unsuspectingly embrace its errors, for the teachings of Christianity, who, should they meet it undisguised, would shun it as they would the hissing serpent. So far as the influences that emanate from unsanctified hearts is allowed to dictate the language of the pulpit, and direct the exercises of the sanctuary, it will constrain the one to speak such smooth things as will startle none from their own carnal repose, and mould the other into a form which will secure the friendship and support of an unrenewed world. In no one instance has this been more strikingly illustrated than on the subject of conversion and the means to be employed to procure conversions. This has led to a rejection, on the part of many, of special religious efforts,

and revivals, as vulgar and beneath the dignity and refinements of the fashionable Christianity of the age. And why should it not be so where unsanctified hearts mold the form and give tone to the spirit of devotion? Worldly-minded men and professors destitute of the vital energies of faith, are not suited to the work of revivals; they cannot labor efficiently in them, and it is one of the most natural dictates of selfish and proud hearts to countenance and support only that form and spirit of religion in which they can act their parts. The consequence is, revivals and special efforts are repudiated by those who adhere to the forms of religion without the power.

The writer believes that revivals are the life and the hope of the church, and that without them she would soon relapse into a state of dead formality, and become as destitute of the power of Godliness as those religious establishments, with whom membership depends upon birth-right and not a change of heart. To counteract these influences, and to promote genuine revivals of religion this little volume has been written, and dignified with the title of "Revival Manual." The author believes it will be found to contain an ample vindication of revivals, as well as useful suggestions in relation to the means of promoting them, and the manner of conducting them. Errors have often been connected with revivals, and no friend of revivals will wish to deny that they have often been injured and retarded by bad management on the part of those who have had the directing of them, and to

guard against these errors, and to improve their management is one object of this little book. The writer is perfectly aware that no rules can supply the lack of good sense and sound discretion on the part of those who labor in, and manage revivals, yet rules may assist the judgment, and to some extent, supply the lack of experience. General rules only can be given to advantage, and it is believed that these will be found in this Manual, as full as they can be rendered generally useful.

The author need only add that if it shall appear, in the day when God shall make up his jewels, that this little book has been the instrument, through God's abounding grace, of promoting a single revival, or of adding one to the number of converts in one revival, God will be glorified, and the author's highest ambition will be secured in kind, though his desires, prayers and hopes aim at greater success. But this must depend upon the use his brethren shall make of it, and upon the blessing of God which shall attend their efforts. The author's prayer is that the revival spirit may be re-kindled, and increase, until it shall pervade the whole church and the world. Amen.

THE AUTHOR.

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THE
REVIVAL MANUAL.

SECTION I.

What is meant by a revival.—The nature of a true revival explained.

REVIVALS of religion have occurred in all ages of the Church, and though they have exhibited different features and aspects, at different periods, according to the intellectual cast and temperament of the people among whom they have transpired, yet they have been essentially the same thing in all important particulars. But what is a revival? Some suppose that a revival is but another name for fanaticism; but this is owing to a want of information, or to prejudice. That fanaticism has sometimes been developed during the progress of a revival is not to be denied, but the revival is one thing and the

fanaticism another, and the one may exist without the other. It is not loud prayers, noisy meetings, nor any degree of ecstasy on the part of a Church or Christian congregation that constitutes a revival; these may all exist with or without a revival.

A revival is an increased attention to religion, including an increase of zeal and effort on the part of Christians, and the repentance, conversion and reformation of sinners. This is not the place to inquire into the necessity or propriety of these occasional religious developments; whether they are founded upon the true philosophy of religion and of mind, or whether it be more consistent to look for the progress of religion to be uniform, showing no more energy and no more rapid growth at one time than another, are questions to be settled in another place; we here take them as they are, and speak of their nature as we find them. The elements of a revival, as we understand them, include the following particulars:

1. An increased degree of divine influence in connection with the word preached, the prayers offered, the hymns sung, and all the efforts that are put forth for the upbuilding of

Christians, and the reformation of Sinners. This increase of religious power is to be attributed to a greater degree of the Holy Spirit, which manifests itself in greater faith, greater zeal, more vigorous efforts, and deeper feeling on the part of Christians generally. We will not pause at this point to parley with skeptics, who may deny the existence of what we call divine influence; all true experimental Christians know that the Spirit helpeth their infirmities, and that it helpeth more mightily at some times than at others. The minister preaches with greater liberty, he speaks with greater power, his hearers listen more attentively, feel more deeply under the word, have greater freedom in their own religious exercises, and are more faithful in the discharge of their duties.

2. The conviction and conversion of sinners, is another essential element of a genuine revival. This will usually follow the state of things described above. When ministers and professed Christians are awake, and feel deeply for the salvation of souls, sinners will generally feel, repent and reform. The process is simply this, sinners who are careless and prayerless, and are "without hope and with-

out God in the world," have their attention called to their spiritual interests, and see their guilt and danger; they feel a deep sense of guilt, and form a deliberate purpose to forsake sin, and to obey God in future; they do actually reform their habits, they go to God in prayer, and asking for pardon through faith in Jesus Christ, they receive the remission of their sins, and "being justified by faith they have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." When any number of sinners thus reform, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance, it is called a revival, or a reformation. When a single person is reclaimed from the error of his ways, as above described, we do not dignify it with the name of a revival, though we call it a conversion.

3. A revival is generally, if not always, attended by extra or unusual religious efforts. A protracted meeting is commonly held in connection with a revival, or if not a protracted meeting, a succession of meetings, or more frequent meetings than are held at other times. The revivals may commence first, and extra meetings follow as a result; or the meetings may be commenced first, of deliberate purpose on the part of the pastor and his church, and

the revival follows as a result of the extra religious efforts. Be the order of cause and effect as it may, we think a revival of any considerable extent, seldom if ever transpires without extra meetings, constituting something analogous to what is called a protracted meeting. The propriety of these extra efforts must be considered hereafter; in this place they are only named as a fact connected with revivals.

That the above is a true description of a revival will not be denied by any who have examined the subject, and made themselves familiar in revival scenes. It is true, all revivals are not alike in every particular; some are more extensive than others, some are more marked than others by extraordinary displays of divine influence in the subjugation of obdurate sinners, and some are more noted than others for irregularities and extraneous developments, which are no part of the revival itself, but the above are the essential elements of all genuine revivals. All observers have seen men come forward and confess their crimes, and make restitution to those whom they had injured; the drunkard, the liar, the profane swearer, the sabbath breaker, and the

dishonest have reformed, and have afterwards conducted themselves as becometh a profession of godliness. These facts have been seen and read of all men; and where they exist, they may be regarded as the fruits of a genuine revival. That religious excitement and influence which reforms the wicked and makes men better, is alone to be dignified with the name of a revival; and where we see such results, we may safely conclude a right influence prevails, for a bad influence is not likely to make men better.

SECTION II.

Revivals of religion are in harmony with the most enlightened christian views of the divine character and attributes, and with God's visible providential dealings with men.

As it is the object of this section to make it appear that revivals are in harmony with the character and economy of God, the end may be best attained by stating the question to be discussed in the form of an objection, and then giving it a clear and direct reply.

One of the strongest objections against revivals, is that they are periodical, or occasional only. This is thought to be inconsistent with the common views entertained of the goodness, omnipresence and unchangeableness of God. This objection is urged by different classes of persons, and essentially the same thing is presented in different forms, according to the degree of skepticism of those who urge the objection. We once found it stated in a book, in the following words :

“ The Bible teaches us, and Nature corroborates the pleasing fact, that God is undevia-

ting and unchanging in his providential dealings with men. He is to-day what he was yesterday, and what he will be tomorrow what he will be forever. But these extraordinary periodical commotions—if we admit they are, what they are said to be, the free and voluntary outpouring of the Holy Spirit—represent God as a sort of traveling Deity, who occasionally pays a short visit to certain towns and villages, with gracious and saving influences, and then again leaves them to their own destruction.”

This presents the whole objection in its full force, though it be in rather an unpolished style, and we will try to meet and answer it. The objection involves two points, viz: the unchangeableness of God, in himself; and his implied changeableness in revivals of religion, which the writer supposes. We believe these points are both untenable, in the sense of objections to revivals of religion.

That God is unchangeable in a true, rational and Bible sense, we admit, and rest upon it as the only basis of religious security; but the immutability of God, as understood by us, does not exclude all variety from the divine administration amid this changing world of

moral agents. But to meet the objection directly we remark,

1. It is not true that "God is undeviating and unchanging in his providential dealings with men," in a sense which constitutes an objection against even periodical, or occasional revivals of religion. If the doctrine of the objection be correct, it must follow that God deals the same with the sinner that he does with the saint; that he will just as soon pour salvation and the blessed fulness of his Holy Spirit upon him that worships devils, as upon him that worships the Father in spirit and in truth. Nor is it possible for us to see how God can ever do anything for the salvation of sinners which he is not now doing, or ever save those whom he does not now save, if the objection under consideration be valid. That many men are not now saved is too plain to be denied; take for the sake of the illustration, a deeply depraved sinner, one who appears now to be wholly abandoned to wickedness, and if he is ever to be saved he has got to be converted and changed, and God has got to deal with him differently from what he deals with him now. God does not save him now, and if "the Bible teaches us that God is un-

changing in his providential dealings with man," how can it be made to appear that he will ever save him? His salvation can never take place without admitting a change in God's providential dealings with him, of the same kind and to the same degree that is implied in a revival of religion.

No one can fail to see that the objection supposes a kind of stereotype edition of God's dealings with man, which will not admit of his doing anything for the salvation of sinners, which he is not doing now, and which he has not always been doing; and the result is, those that are not now saved can never be saved, through the divine interposition, and are thrown upon their own resources, and appear suspended between the alternatives of saving themselves, or never being saved. That God always deals with men upon the same unchangeable principles of eternal rectitude, is admitted; but these principles which never change, being the result of God's immutable nature, not only admit of, but absolutely require a change in his dealings with men, according to the changes which may take place in their characters and conduct.

2. It is not true that "the Bible teaches us

that God is undeviating and unchanging in his providential dealings with man." But where we ask does the Bible teach this doctrine? Is it in the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy? Let the reader examine the whole chapter and see if he can find in it, that God is undeviating in his providential dealings. Is it found in 1st Chronicles, xxvi. 9? "And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind; if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever." Is the doctrine of our author found in Isaiah, lix. 1, 2.? "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear." Is the doctrine of God's unchanging providential dealings with men found in Hosea vi. 1.? "Come and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn and he will heal us; he hath smitten and he will bind us up." Is it found in Malachi, iii. 7.? "Return unto me, saith the Lord." Is it contained in v. 10? "Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that

there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." These quotations most clearly prove that the objection has no foundation in the scriptures.

3. It is not true that "Nature corroborates the pleasing fact, that God is undeviating and unchanging in his providential dealings with man." And how does nature corroborate this? Is it by yielding abundant harvests, and then repaying the labor of the husbandman with blight and famine? Is it by giving us fruitful showers one season, scorching and withering drought in another, and overflowing and destroying waters in a third? Is it in the voice of the gentle zephyr that fans us with the very breath of health, perfumed with the rich odor of vernal flowers, in the pestiferous wind, or the voice of the storm that howls amid the ravages of the angry elements?

But we will not pursue this train of thought, for every one knows that God does deal differently with different persons and nations, and with the same persons and nations at different times.

4. It is not true that occasional, or even periodical revivals, represent God as changeable in any offensive sense, much less, "as a sort of traveling Deity," as the objection affirms. This will be plain, if we attend to the following considerations:

We believe that it is perfectly consistent with God's unchanging nature and principles to bring greater influences to bear upon the human mind at one time than at another. Taking man as he is, in view of his natural depravity, and the depraved associations in which he is placed, God, no doubt, does enough for each and all, to render them without excuse if they do not repent and obey him,—yet he doubtless brings greater influences to bear upon human minds some times than at others, and for aught we know he brings more powerful influences to bear upon some minds than he ever does upon other minds. Every sinner, who lives and dies a sinner, doubtless has seasons, during his life, when he feels his mind more deeply impressed with the subject of religion, and when stronger influences are brought to bear upon him, than at other times. This remark we will also apply to communities, and say that God is no doubt pleased. at

some times, to bring stronger religious influences to bear upon particular churches, neighborhoods and communities, than at other times, and all this, without supposing that he, at any time, leaves them so destitute of light and moral influence as to excuse them for not being pious, or to render their damnation unjust if they perish in their sins. Now, if these things are so—and who can deny them with his Bible before him?—are not revivals of religion to be looked for, when we consider this feature of the divine administration, in connection with the known philosophy of the human mind? To say that men are not more likely to be converted and become pious under stronger religious influence, than under less religious influence, would be too absurd to be received by any person of common sense—it would be to say that influence is no influence!

SECTION III.

Revivals of Religion are in harmony with the philosophy of the human mind.

NOTHING can be more clearly demonstrated than that it is in perfect accordance with the known philosophy of the human mind, that revivals of religion should occur under the ordinary religious influences, which God has established to save men. Suppose then these influences to be calculated to result in individual conversions, and still it will be more reasonable to expect the work to be done, as a general thing, during occasional seasons of revivals, than otherwise. Man is not only a creature of thought, but also a creature of sympathy and feeling, and both his powers of thought and capability of sympathy and feeling, are mediums through which influences are brought to bear upon him for good or ill. If the fact that one person pursues a course of wickedness, exerts an influence over others, and is, in many instances, the cause of their pursuing a course of wickedness, which no one can doubt, is it not reasonable to suppose

that the fact that one sinner repents and becomes converted, should influence others to reform and seek God? Thus when one is converted and makes a public profession, others are influenced; and as the number of converts is multiplied, the influence of example becomes stronger, and the revival increases in power. This kind of influence added to all the other influences under which sinners constantly live, considered in connection with the fact that God does pour out his Spirit at particular seasons more than at other times, in our view, explains the whole phenomenon of revivals.

To this view, we know of but one objection of any material weight, which we will now state, and attempt to answer. It is this; If this be the philosophy of revivals, a revival once commenced, should continue, becoming deeper, and spreading wider, until it should encircle and convert the world. This would undoubtedly be the case, if there were no opposing influences, and if the whole world was in a condition to be brought into a direct line of sympathy with the influence of the revival. But there are several considerations which

may account for, and explain the fact that revivals cease after continuing for a time.

1. It may be broken in upon by some new and adverse influence. Any influence which is sufficient to divert attention for a short time, may stop a revival, for the moment attention is diverted, the influence above described is lost, and the revival stops.

2. If a revival was not checked by some adverse influence, it would soon cease, as fire subsides when the fuel is exhausted, having done its work on all within the circle of its influence, of an age to be converted. Of course, as every generation needs to be converted, when a new class shall have arisen up, or shall have been introduced by ingress, there may be another revival

3. A revival may stop from the fact, that all are converted who will yield, at a given time, to all these moral influences combined. As these influences operate upon man as upon a moral agent, who may and who does frequently resist them all, a revival must cease when all have been converted who will at that time, and in that particular community, yield to such influences as have produced the revival.

We believe some are wont to speak of con-

stant revivals, of having revivals all the time, of God's willingness to revive his work at any time, and all the time, without realizing the full meaning of the language they employ.

1. Any operation which shall be constant, unremitting, and uniform, would not be a revival, in the sense in which the term is used, when applied to a religious state or operation. That Christians should be faithful at all times, and under all circumstances, is admitted; but that fidelity requires them to make all the same efforts, at all times, and under all circumstances, is not admitted, and can never be proved. That Christians should grow in grace and in the knowledge of God, constantly and perpetually, is admitted, but that is not what is meant by a revival. By a revival is meant the quickening of those who have partially or wholly backslid, and the conversion of sinners; not that regular growth in grace which is the duty and privilege of saints. God is willing to revive his work at any time, if the appropriate means be used, but that he requires individual Christians and Churches to put forth all the same class of efforts, and to the same extent, at all times, that is required of them at some particular times, and under

some circumstances, is not admitted. That backsliders may be reclaimed, and sinners be converted at any time, is admitted; but that they are as likely to be, as under the influence of particular seasons, and special efforts, is not admitted, and cannot be proved.

2. If every Christian would do his whole duty, at all times, and all sinners would repent immediately, and each child of man born into the world, believe in Jesus Christ with a heart unto righteousness, so soon as they have sufficient mental capacity, there would be no room for what are now called revivals; but this is not the state of things with which we have to do. If we will only look at things as they are, and consider the fact that men are subjects of influence, and that the repentance and conversion of one sinner exerts an influence over the minds of others to induce them to repent, the mystery of revivals will disappear. Take the following as an illustration: One of the most interesting revivals, in which the writer ever participated, occurred on this wise, so far as human agency was concerned, and so far as the human eye could see. A young lady, some sixteen or seventeen years old, went to a quarterly meeting more than

ten miles from her place of residence; she went as a mere passenger with a Methodist family that was going to the meeting, from her neighborhood; but she became interested in the prayer-meeting on Saturday evening, went forward for prayers, and professed conversion. She returned home, and at once came in contact with her young associates, among whom she had been a leader. Of course there was a conflict of influence; it was to be expected that she would relapse into her former carelessness on the subject of religion, that they should be led to embrace religion, or they would have to break off their association. She openly and frankly told them what God had done for her, and entreated them to seek God as she had done, and to go with her. There was more power in her words than in many learned yet cold-hearted sermons, and it took effect, and nearly the whole neighborhood turned from the vanities of the world, to seek the living God, before the revival closed which resulted from so humble an instrumentality. These converts were made better; they forsook sin and turned to the practice of religion. The end of all religious efforts was accomplished, which is to reform men and make

them do their duties to God and man. This was a revival, and in view of it several queries may be raised. First, could the same amount of good have been secured in that community, in the use of any ordinary means, without what is called a revival? We think not. So many persons could not have been persuaded to forsake sin and betake themselves to prayer, and all the duties of religion, without the revival, or without producing essentially the state of things which constituted the revival. Secondly, was it not the duty of the minister having charge of souls in that place, to turn the influence of the circumstances named above, to the best account, so as to reclaim as many sinners as possible? Was it right, and would not the impulse of a pious heart lead him to embue his sermons with the influence that pervaded the community, and to hold extra meetings, and so manage them as to secure the reformation of as many as possible? If these questions be answered in the affirmative, we have all the paraphernalia of a revival. If they be answered in the negative, we have a question to ask the objector. How would a minister answer in the day of judgment, for the souls committed to

his charge, who should neglect such an opportunity to reclaim sinners? He might have cast his influence against it, and prevented the spread of the influence proceeding from the conversion of the young lady, and thereby prevented the revival, in which case those souls would not have turned from sin. As it was, several of them died within a few years, in full assurance of a glorious immortality. The presumption is that but for the revival, they would have lived and died in sin, and the minister having prevented, or failed to secure their reformation by preventing the revival, how could he account for those souls in the day of retribution? Infidels, and Universalists, who believe in no day of judgment, and no future punishment, can answer this question consistently with their own theories; but those who profess to believe in the doctrine of a heaven and a hell after death, and that man's destiny to the one or the other, depends upon the fact of his being or not being reformed in this world, can never answer, consistently with their professed faith.

3. It is necessary for those who would be successful in promoting revivals to understand the philosophy of the mind, that they may

know how to apply the influences that control it. This will enable them to repel those influences which are opposed to revivals, and give force to those which promote them.

To know how to promote revivals, it is necessary to know what influences stand opposed to the truth, and how those influences are to be resisted, removed, or overcome. Truth is stronger than error, and will triumph over it, if the conflict be on equal ground. "The carnal mind is enmity against God," and hence takes sides with error, but still truth possesses power sufficient to subdue the heart to God, if the mind can be held under its light and power even for a short time. The success of error lies in its engaging the mind in so many forms, and so occupying the attention of the sinner that he has no time to think of the truth, and of its claims upon him. If sinners could be kept thinking about the truth, of its claims upon them, of sin, its enormity, of the necessity of being saved from it, and of their future destiny, they would repent and submit to God. Error exerts its greatest power over the mind by diverting its attention from the truth, and preventing its being occupied with religious thoughts. This explains

the reason why so much good preaching is apparently lost. The multitude listen to moving sermons on the Sabbath day, and many hearts are impressed, and many desires for religion awakened, but so soon as the Sabbath is ended, they plunge into the cares of the world, or seek relief from the serious impressions that disturb them, amid the vain amusements that the world presents on every side, calculated to drown serious thoughts, and before another Sabbath arrives, all the impressions received in the sanctuary are lost. To overcome this difficulty, an impression must be made so deep as to render it abiding, or the mind must be held to the contemplation of religious truth, until it becomes so far a habit that it can resist the assaults of opposite influences. This principle in the philosophy of the human mind is understood and applied on all subjects except religion, and why should it be overlooked here? Who does not know that a fright may so impress the mind as to leave its effects as lasting as life? So the sudden reception of vastly important news, good or bad, will make an impression on the mind which will require days, weeks, or months to efface, and which may be pa-

manent. Now, suppose the claims of God be presented to the understanding and conscience, in the light of the truth applied by the Holy Spirit, and is there anything unphilosophical or unreasonable in supposing that an impression can be made equally deep and lasting?

Suppose the light of divine truth that is brought to bear upon the mind be less intense; but suppose the mind to be held to the contemplation of that truth, and the same general result will be arrived at in the end. It is only by diverting their attention from the truth that sinners can live in sin with any degree of ease; hence if any method can be devised to arrest the attention of sinners, and hold their attention to a contemplation of sin, its guilt, the claims of God, and the destiny of the soul, their reformation will be probable, to say the least.

What remains is to apply these principles to the subject of revivals. Here we find one strong reason why the conversion of one person leads to the conversion of others, and why the influence of a revival increases with the number of its subjects. The reason is, it becomes the subject of thought which holds the mind to the contemplation of religion.

An individual in a given circle is converted and the attention of the whole circle is arrested, and with some the thinking may be so intense as to divert attention from the other subjects of thought which have occupied the mind, and repentance and submission to God is the result. As the number of converts increase, the revival becomes more and more a subject of absorbing religious thought, which increases in its influence and power.

The view we have taken above, also throws light on the subject of protracted meetings. They have been looked upon by some as a sort of human machine, for doing the work which belongs to the Holy Ghost to do. This is a false view. It is not the fault of the Holy Ghost that there is not a revival, or that sinners are not converted; sinners are so occupied with other matters as to grieve the Spirit, and prevent the action of its renewing power upon the heart. We will then at a convenient season, hold a protracted meeting; and what is the object? It is not to do the work of the Holy Ghost, but to call the attention of christians and sinners to the subject of religion, and to hold their attention there for a series of days, until they become so impressed

with religious thoughts as to become proper subjects of the renewing power of the Holy Ghost. A protracted meeting is an attempt to set a community to thinking about religion for a number of days in succession, and where this can be effectually done, by any process, a revival will be the result.

SECTION IV.

Revivals of religion, as they transpire and are conducted at the present age, have a sufficient Scriptural warrant to justify christians in promoting them.

It is well understood that the position taken in the title to this section, conflicts with the honest prejudices of many very good people. It has often been objected to revivals, and to protracted meetings in particular, that they are unscriptural. We do not expect to be able to remove this prejudice entirely, in every case, but as we are confident that it is the result of education, which has prevented a due appreciation of the claim of revivals to a scriptural warrant, so we trust that we shall at least soften the prejudice of all such as will have patience to read, and candor to consider what follows.

We admit that there is no text which says, in so many words, that each church must hold a protracted meeting every winter, nor yet that there shall be, or ought to be, an occasional revival in each church. Still, after these admissions, we insist that neither pro-

tracted meetings or revivals are unscriptural, yea, more, we insist that they have sufficient scriptural warrant to exempt them from objection on this ground. A protracted meeting is no more than the devotion of several days in succession to religious meetings. Is there any objection founded in scripture, against devoting a number of days in succession, on the part of a church or community, to preaching and prayer? If the objection be to the manner in which they are conducted, the objection itself admits that they may be right if rightly conducted. The manner may sometimes be objectionable, but this we do not propose to examine at this point, but only attend to the fact of the propriety or impropriety, right or wrong, of protracted meetings in themselves. The objection is simply to a meeting continued for several days in succession. Now though there may be no express warrant for just such meetings, yet essentially the same thing has been practiced in all ages.

The Jews held three protracted meetings each year called feasts, the Passover, the feast of Pentecost, and the feast of Tabernacles. There can be no doubt that the early christians held daily meetings, as the following

scriptures most clearly show: "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren."—Acts i. 14. "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."—Chap. ii. 46, 47. "And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily."—Chap. xvi. 5.

These scriptures certainly prove that daily meetings were held by the first christians; and if so, it cannot be objectionable for churches to hold meetings for a number of days in succession, at a season when they can attend to it without infringing upon other claims. But it may be that the objection is to the revivals that are sometimes the apparent result of protracted meetings, rather than to the simple fact of having a meeting upon a number of days in succession. Let us then look at this question in the light of the scriptures. In the eighth chapter of Nehemiah,

we have an account of a protracted meeting and a great revival, as follows. " And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water-gate; and they spake unto Ezra, the scribe, to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel. And Ezra, the priest, brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month; and read therein before the street that was before the water-gate from the morning until mid-day, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law. And Ezra, the scribe, stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Masseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam. And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up: and Ezra blessed the

Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands; and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground. So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water gate of Ephraim. And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths; for since the days of Joshua, the son of Nun, unto that day, had not the children of Israel done so, and there was very great gladness. Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God, and they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according unto the manner. Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackcloths, and earth upon them. And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers; and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers. And they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law

of the Lord their God one fourth part of the day; and another fourth part they confessed, and worshipped the Lord their God."

This was certainly both a protracted meeting, and a revival. Another protracted meeting and revival is recorded, Acts viii. 5, &c.

"Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city. Then Simon himself believed also; and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost."

There are other texts which might be quoted, but the above are sufficient to show that no objection can be maintained against pro-

tracted meeting and revivals, on the ground that they are unscriptural.

We will close this view of the subject with two remarks, designed to sustain our own side of the question :

1. The duty of making extra and special efforts for the promotion of the work of God, as times and seasons favor it, is clearly taught in the scriptures. Take the following language:

“ For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.”

“ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.”

“ As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”

Nothing is plainer than that individuals and churches, have greater opportunities at some seasons than at others. At a leisure season, they can devote more time to religious meetings than in harvest time. They are required to do at all times, all they can, consistently with other claims.

2. The promises of God authorise us to

look for results proportioned to the efforts we put forth, through faith in his name. Take the following as a specimen :

“ Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”—Mal. iii, 10.

“ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double minded.”—James iv, 7, 8.

“ The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain ; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit. Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him ; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.”

—James v, 16-20.

SECTION V..

The incidents of revivals, such as excitement, extravagance, and the subsequent apostacy of some of the converts, constitute no objection to revivals.

I. The excitement and extravagance of revivals do not constitute a valid objection to revivals, but only to the manner of conducting them, so far as any objection exists. It will be found, however, that most that is objected to has its foundation in true philosophy, and is an essential element of a true and deep work of God.

1. We insist that there is excitement, necessarily connected with the repentance and conversion of sinners. All scriptural examples of repentance and reformation, indicate excitement. A few illustrations must answer. Jer. 1, 5: "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping; they shall go and seek the Lord their God." Again, can any one who knows any thing of the philosophy of the human mind, believe that there was not a great

Excitement under John's preaching, as recorded Matt. iii, 1-12? "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized in Jordan confessing their sins." The same circumstances could not transpire at this day, and in this land, without a great excitement. Was not the Publican excited, when he smote upon his breast, and said, "God be merciful to me a sinner?" Was not the Jailor excited when he cried out, "What shall I do to be saved?" Was not the whole multitude excited, when they were pricked in the heart, and cried, "What shall we do?"—Acts ii, 37. Many other instances might be given, but the above are sufficient. Indeed, there is no genuine repentance or conversion without more or less excitement, and it is not confined even to earth, for "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth."

2. The degree of this excitement, and the manner in which it develops itself, depends upon the mental constitution, nervous temperament, the influence of education, and degree of intelligence. There are different operations, but the same spirit. Can any one

doubt that equally good men have different exercises, and are moved in different degrees, under the same exhibition of truth and the same measure of the Spirit? Such a position would betray great ignorance of human nature.

Cry in the ears of two sleeping individuals, that their house is on fire, and let them start up under the glare of the increasing flame, and they will not both act alike; one may appear as much again excited as the other. So you may cry in the ears of two sinners, that their souls are in danger, and suppose them both to take the alarm, and you will see as much difference in their manner under the influence of repentance, as in the two persons roused by the alarm of fire. Religion does not merge the mental differences that exist among men, and hence, there always will be as great a difference in the religious excitement which different persons exhibit, as in the excitement arising from any other cause. At the sight of sudden and great danger, one person shrieks, another is struck dumb, a third swoons, and a fourth is roused to deeds of noble daring, and exhibits unwonted mental and physical power; and the same difference

in degree must be expected under religious excitement, for religious truth and the Holy Spirit, have the same elements of the human soul to act upon, involving all of the same principles of mental philosophy. In the light of this philosophy, we are to explain all the religious phenomena which we witness in revivals or elsewhere. Nor does this call in question the sincerity and the genuineness of the religion of those who may even have undue and extravagant exercises. To illustrate: Suppose you collect a company of friends and reveal to them the fact that their nearest friend on earth is dead, and some will receive it apparently unmoved, while others will shriek, and others faint. In like manner, present the claims of God's law, the turpitude of sin, and magnitude of their guilt, and let the light of the Spirit shine to give effect to the word, and an equal difference will be seen. Reveal to the same company that they are all heirs to an immense fortune, and some will laugh, and some will cry, some will jump up and clap their hands, and others will say nothing, but look wonderfully astonished. So reveal to them the facts of a glorious resurrection, a triumphant ascension and an immortal

existence, a crown and a song amid the glories of the throne of God, and let the Spirit truly impress these truths upon the mind, and the same different degrees of excitement will be seen. Will any one pretend to say that the emotions produced by the announcement of the death of a friend, or the receipt of an estate, are unreal or feigned? Certainly not. Well, are the emotions produced by the presentation of the claims and threatenings of the divine law, or the prospect of heaven, when those subjects are impressed upon the heart by the Holy Spirit, any less real? To come to such a conclusion, we must first shut our eyes to the philosophy of the human mind, which retains all its susceptibilities of impression, feeling and emotion, when acted upon by a religious cause, which it has when acted upon by any other cause.

3. The extravagancies which sometimes manifest themselves in revivals, constitute no objection against revivals, but only argue a weakness on the part of those who exhibit them. It is not to be disguised that objectionable expressions are often heard, and unprofitable exercises often witnessed in revivals; but they are not the revival, nor are

hey the necessary results of a revival. Such things often transpire where there is no revival in progress, on the one hand, while on the other, revivals often transpire without any of these objectionable developments. We have seen ministers rant and rave in the pulpit, but we would not therefore condemn the institution of the ministry and the practice of preaching as an evil. Nor would we condemn revivals because there are sometimes persons engaged in them, who transcend the bounds of propriety—we would only labor to correct the evil.

On the communication to Congress, in Philadelphia, of the news of Burgoyne's surrender, it is said that the doorkeeper actually died of joy. Would you therefore never venture to tell good news? A better way would be to make all necessary communications, whether good or ill, being careful to do it in such a manner as appears best calculated to secure the end aimed at, with as little incidental evil as possible, which sometimes results from human weakness. Much depends on the management of revivals, and ministers, instead of opposing them, should promote them, and

so managing as to give them full success, with as few objectionable features as possible.

Much of what is involved in this subject, is matter of taste, and cannot be made the subject of specific rule. It is not possible that all should be pleased in every particular. What one class of Methodists would consider perfectly orderly, some good Presbyterians brethren, equally pious, would consider disorder, bordering on confusion. What these good Presbyterian brethren would consider perfect order, some good Episcopalians would regard as a breach of all decorum. It is not for us to say that there are not pious persons found in the two extremes, as well as at all intermediate points. "There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all."—1 Cor. xii, 6.

II. The assertion that revival converts fall away, cannot fail to vanish, as an objection to revivals, on slight examination. The fact that converts sometimes fall away, cannot be denied, but may be accounted for without impeaching the genuineness of revivals.

1. The same evil has existed in all ages of the Church, even under the superintendence of the apostles. The writings of the apos-

ties clearly show that backsliding was a common evil in their time. Were their revivals spurious?

2. The reason why protracted meeting and revival converts are seen to fall away, is, there are no other converts to fall away. Very few, comparatively, have been converted except at protracted meetings and in what are called revivals. This remark may not be appreciated by those who hold to a birth-right christianity and membership in the Church, but those who hold the doctrine of a change of heart must feel its force. A large portion of the members of the churches, and many of the most able ministers, have been brought in during protracted meetings and revival seasons.

3. The reason why so many fall away is to be sought for in the neglect of the Church, rather than in the fact that they are converted in revivals. Ministers and older Christians are not faithful enough, and do not watch over converts with sufficient solicitude and tenderness to preserve them alive. The churches are too cold and worldly-minded to be any pattern for, or help to converts. The only safe way for converts is, not only to retain their first love, but to progress and "grow in

grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," so as not to be the largest when they are born that they ever are. But to do this, they must take the lead and go ahead of the older members of the flock, which is unnatural; they look to old professors, and think it will answer to be as faithful as they are, and thus they neglect duty, grow cold, become formal, and too many fall entirely; and then cold hearted and formal professors will lay it to revivals and protracted meetings.

SECTION VI.

The importance of Revivals.

THERE are various reasons which might be urged why revivals are important to the church, to the cause of religion, and the best interests of the world. If the conversions which transpire in revivals are genuine, and sinners are really reclaimed from sin, in heart and life, then are revivals as important as is the advancement of the kingdom of God. That revivals are promotive of the work of God; that they are the work of God, and that souls are saved through their instrumentality, who would otherwise perish, so far as human calculations can reach, has probably been sufficiently proved to justify us in taking this main point for granted in what remains to be said. An application of the principles already established is what is necessary to finish this part of our work; and this application, if properly made, will not fail to impress the reader with the importance of revivals.

1. Nearly all the souls that profess experimental religion have been converted during revival seasons, and may be regarded as their legitimate fruit. We do not say that there are no true christians who are not the fruit of revivals, so called; there are doubtless many scattered throughout the different churches and congregations, but we say that a very large portion of the present ministers of the gospel, and far the greatest number of the living, working christians, were first brought to Christ during revival scenes. This points out revivals as God's method of working in this age and during these times, and whatever is God's method of working must be important. The only point that will or can be disputed here, is the remark above, that the greatest portion of living, working christians, were brought to Christ during revival seasons. That this is true of revival churches, such churches as believe in and have been favored with revivals, we think cannot be successfully disputed. To such, therefore, revivals must appear important, if not essential to their continued existence and spiritual life and prosperity. But it will be said that many of the largest and most flourishing churches, not

only have never had revivals, but have not believed in them, and have opposed them. Abating any high moral and spiritual sense which some may attach to the word, flourishing, we admit all this, but it does not disprove the importance of revivals. There are in these same large and flourishing anti-revival churches many who are not living, working christians. We will not be so uncharitable as to say that they are churches of sinners and hypocrites, but we will make a remark which, if well founded, will sustain our position in relation to the importance of revivals. We say, therefore,

2. Those churches which have had no revivals, and which have even thrown their influence against revivals, have often shared largely in the benefits of the revivals promoted by others. There have been frequent instances in which the children and immediate friends of the members of those churches who discountenance revivals, have been brought within their influence, and have been converted. At first they would do what they could to prevent their going to the revival meetings, would represent their proceedings as disorderly, their conversions as the result of ani-

mal excitement, and their devotion as wild-fire; but when this would succeed no longer, —when their children, their friends, their neighbors, and members of their congregation, were brought under the influence of the revival and converted, they changed their tone, and set themselves at work to secure them to their own church and communion, and have often been successful. Though they oppose revivals, they do not hesitate to gather all the fruit of revivals within their reach, and rejoice to receive into church fellowship those who are converted at revival meetings, on confession of the faith and hope there obtained. This proves one of two things; either that they believe revival conversions are sound, or else they are willing to receive into their churches, persons who are either deceived or make false pretensions. Be this as it may, the fact cannot be denied, that many members of anti-revival churches were converted in revivals, and constitute much of the life found in those communities. This view much enhances the importance of revivals, for if the spiritual life and energy of revival churches depends upon these revivals, and much of the life and religious energy of those who do not

promote revivals, be derived from the same source, they are at once presented in an important point of light. There is one other aspect of this subject worthy of notice. No one can doubt that churches which have never been brought under the influence of the revival spirit, have been more or less impressed, and excited to zeal and good works, by the revivals that have prevailed around them. Ministers have often been driven to hold extra meetings, and to preach more frequently and earnestly to hold their congregations, lest they should be drawn away by the attractions of the revivals that have prevailed around them. But for these influences, who can tell how formal and dead churches would have become?

3. If revivals of religion are genuine, as we have argued, and if they indicate God's method of working in these latter days, they are important, simply as a divinely favored instrumentality. It is only by denying that they are of God, that any one can escape the conviction that it is through their increase in number and power, that God will yet subdue this rebellious world to himself, and fill it with his knowledge and glory. Something must be done more than has been done, and

even more rapidly than any thing that is now in process of being done, if the latter days of the church are to be more bright and glorious than the present, or than those that have preceded. Are we to give up all hope of a brighter day, or are we to yet realize a fulfilment of those predictions which appear to promote more of the knowledge and glory of God than any age of the world has yet seen? If something more general and glorious is yet to be achieved in the cause of the world's salvation, it must be by some new dispensation, or it must be by an increase of what is already in operation. We do not feel that we are authorized to look for a new dispensation, and hence must look to the present agencies, by an increased action, to accomplish whatever improvement is to be hoped for; and we see not how this is to be done only by promoting revivals of religion. If revivals are the work of God, if souls are really converted from the error of their ways, and brought to Christ through their instrumentality, as has been shown, and if most of the visible work of God that has been accomplished, has been through the influence of revivals, they are distinctly pointed out as the mode in which

God is pleased to work in this age and in these times, and here gleams out the hope of a brighter day, and here should be directed our energies, that we may be co-workers with God. God has not promised to allow us to select our own time, and measures, and mode of working, and then to work with us, and crown our measures with success; but he demands of us that we do his will, and work in the use of the means he is pleased to own and bless. To know what his will is, that we may be co-workers with him, we must not only search his word, but watch the indications of his Providence, and the movings of his spirit; and where we see God is working, there should we be ready to work; and such measures as we see God own and bless, we should make our measures for the time being, so long at least as we are convinced that God is in them. Some appear as though they supposed the Holy Ghost bound to operate in accordance with their notions of propriety, and unless he does, they will stand aside and find fault with the operation. Instead of being led by the Spirit, do not such persons presume to dictate to the Holy Ghost, how, in the use of what means, and under what circumstances, he shall

do his work? We know they do not design this, but is it not so in fact? If souls are really converted and reclaimed from sin through the instrumentality of revivals, more than in the use of other measures, those who object to them, and refuse to co-operate, are more particular in relation to measures, times and circumstances, than is the Holy Ghost. We know that this unfortunate position, in many cases at least, is the result of education, rather than of any defection of the heart, but still it is a difficulty to be overcome. Who can tell what would have been the result if no professors of religion had stood aloof from and opposed revivals? There has, perhaps, never been a revival in our country, to which some professed christian church in the immediate vicinity was not openly and publicly opposed, and against which many church members and perhaps the minister, threw their decided personal influence. Can any one tell how many this adverse influence kept out of the kingdom of God? Can any one tell how much longer the revival would have continued, and how much wider it would have spread, but for these influences? It may have been hemmed in by these anti-revival influences,

like fire around which a trench is dug to prevent its spreading. But for such influences the revivals that have transpired might have spread over the nation and the face of the world. It should be enough for the true, humble, obedient christian to know how, and in the use of what means God is pleased to work. And knowing this, he should not stop to confer with flesh and blood, but enter himself into the work with all his heart and mind. If all christians, and all christian ministers, would unite in the one great work of promoting revivals; though they might differ in their forms and modes, yet imbibing the same revival spirit, and aiming at essentially the same results, revivals would at once become more general, their influence would be wider diffused through the professed christian church, and develop greater displays of the majesty and power of God's saving grace. If the world shall ever be converted, it will be by a general diffusion of the revival spirit. This last thought, if correct, makes revivals as important as the conversion of the world.

SECTION VII.

The Commencement of Revivals, with directions for promoting them.

WE now enter upon the more practical, and consequently, the more difficult part of the subject. It is not easy to give directions, so as to make them available to the greatest number of minds, amid the almost endless variety and wide extremes of mental constitutions with which a work like the present has to deal; and it is certainly no less difficult to take up and usefully apply the best conceived and most clearly expressed rules, amid the great variety of circumstances in which revivalists may be called to act. General directions only can be given with any profit, in the application of which sound judgment, discretion, aided by experience, is necessary; the want of which no particularity of rules can supply. So much depends upon the skill, temper, and spirit of a person who executes a given direction, that vastly different results will attend the application of the same rules by different hands. Though general directions

only can be profitably given, yet they may be made to bear specifically on the following points, viz: The commencement, the management during the progress, and the close of revivals. The first of these only will be treated in this section.

The commencement of revivals is certainly an interesting and important point. To know how to begin a revival; that is, to know how to put ourselves in a position, and how to direct our efforts, so as to be the honored instrument, under God, of commencing a revival, is more than to found a civil empire; and yet what to the human eye is a trifling act or circumstance, is often the means of the commencement of a powerful revival. A few illustrations follow. The commencements of revivals are as various as are the incidents of christian experience. There is a general sameness in christian experience, and yet there are no two christians who can relate precisely the same experience; so it is with revivals.

Sometimes a revival breaks out in the midst of the most unpropitious circumstances, overcoming opposing influences, and making observers, as well as participants, feel that it is not of man but of God; that man did not be-

gin it, that man does not carry it on, and that man cannot stop it. Yet in these cases there are human agencies employed, and doubtless some unperceived human instrumentality, under the divine blessing, is concerned in the commencement of the work. Other revivals can be traced in their origin to some particular cause, some marked death, some special effort, some remarkable sermon, or some special interest and grace first felt in prayer on the part of a few. Sometimes the Spirit will appear to move upon the mind of an individual in a church, and from him will go forth the influence of a great revival. An illustration is given on page 27. The following is another illustration.

Some years ago, two brethren of the same church met in the street. One said to the other, "L_____, how do you feel on the subject of religion?" The earnestness and solemnity of his manner affected him. He paused a moment, and said he was ashamed of himself, and desired to repent. Mr. R. said, "I have made up my mind to labor for Christ; I will give my time to the work, if it makes me poor as Lazarus." Tears stood in his eyes. They pledged themselves to each other, and

commenced in solemn earnest. Soon that church was blessed with a glorious work of grace.

A brother in the ministry, with a few of the members of his church, had been to a camp-meeting, at which their minds had been somewhat stirred, but as not a single unconverted member of the congregation had been to the meeting the idea of a revival was not in their minds. On Sabbath evening after their return from the meeting, the brother enjoyed unusual liberty in preaching, and was so moved at the close of his sermon, that he invited those who were resolved to seek religion to rise up. The evening was short and well spent at the close of the sermon, and he prefaced his invitation by stating that he would not ask any one forward for prayer that evening, but that if there were any present who desired religion, he requested them to rise up. To his great surprise, he no sooner gave the invitation than fifteen were upon their feet. He remarked that he felt a solemn duty resting upon him to take back what he had said, that he would not invite persons forward for prayers, and at once urged them to come forward, which they did. The result was, in a few weeks a hundred souls

were converted. It is quite a supposable case that this revival might not have taken place but for the invitation that was given by the minister that evening for those who desired religion to rise up. They were then in a state of mind to commit themselves, and but for the opportunity then given to make that commitment, their impressions might have worn off, so that at a future opportunity, they might have resisted a like invitation.

The simple act of picking up a part of a leaf from a Bible is said to have been the cause of an extensive revival. A company of revellers were assembled and waiting over their mugs of ale for the arrival of their leader, who was always foremost in their mirth. At length he came, but was silent until they rallied him, when to their surprise he confessed his sin, and stated his purpose to reform, and exhorted them to join him in seeking God. A revival was the consequence. But what induced the leader of the party to take such a sudden and strange course. As stated, he had picked up part of a leaf of a Bible in the street, and reading it, its truth fastened upon his heart. How trifling in themselves were the incidents which led to that revival? But

for that leaf being torn from the Bible and thrown into the street, he could not have picked it up, and had he not picked up that torn leaf containing the divine word, probably he would not have repented, his fellows would not have repented, and there would have been no revival.

Revivals often result from previously planned and appointed efforts. The idea of holding a series of meetings with the express design and expectation of inducing a revival, has been treated in preceding sections, particularly in the third, but it is well to allude to it in this place. Suppose a minister should say to his flock, "Brethren, we are not doing all we can to work out our own salvation, and to bring sinners to Christ; we are not all of us sufficiently consecrated to be suited to the work of God, should a revival begin, and we be called upon to enter into its spirit and work. Now is a favorable season, and let us devote a few days more especially to the service of God; let us come together and confess our faults one to another, and pray together for the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit upon ourselves, and for the conversion of our children and neighbors." The proposition is

agreed to by the majority of the Church, and they meet and begin to confess, and pray, and beseech God to quicken them, and to have mercy upon souls around them. Now two questions will settle the matter. First, is it not right to do so? Certainly it is. Secondly, is it not reasonable to expect a revival to result from such measures; and do not the promises of God warrant us in expecting a revival? Certainly we think they do. These two points being admitted, we have the ordinary and most proper way of the beginning of revivals explained. We have known many which commenced precisely as here described; and when the measures have failed to produce a revival, it is reasonable to suppose that it was for want of sincerity, or union on the part of those engaged; or for want of discretion and sound judgment on the part of those who conducted the measures. Such is human nature with which we have to deal, that the most clear truths on the most awfully important subjects, cannot be enforced with general success, when either the agent or the manner is objectionable to those upon whom the attempt is made. This prepares the way to lay down

a few rules to be observed in all attempts to produce or commence a revival.

1. The agencies employed should be such as are reputable and acceptable to the community. This remark is not made of the modes of proceeding, but of the persons employed. Prejudices may exist against good men, and however unreasonable and unfounded they may be, while they exist, they will prove a barrier to their usefulness to the prejudiced party. Sinners are not likely to be benefitted by the labors of a minister against whom they entertain strong prejudices. If they consent to hear them, their words are powerless for good, until such prejudice is first overcome. A minister would be unwise to commence an effort for a revival in a community where he knew that strong prejudices existed against him personally, or against his christian or ministerial character. His first work would be to remove such prejudice, and if he cannot do this he should seek some other field of labor. This is equally true of laymen who may be called to labor in any revival effort, they should have the confidence of the community; without it, their efforts will hinder rather than promote a revival. This rule, however, is not

to be applied to those prejudices which are clearly sectarian, and effect only the members of some opposing religious organization in contradistinction from the rest of the community. This, to be sure, is an evil to be regretted, but should not deter faithful ministers and christians from doing their whole duty, and their efforts, put forth in a right spirit, may be very successful amid the bitterest opposition of opposing sects and errorists. It is better if a minister can have the confidence and sympathies of a whole community, but there are some communities, in which no man could preach the truth, and even employ the ordinary measures to produce a revival without strong opposition, and perhaps from those who profess religion. Such opposition must be borne, it must be met and resisted, but in a true christian spirit. But where prejudice exists against the persons engaged, and especially on the part of that particular portion of the community more immediately interested in the efforts to be made, it must be removed before success can be expected. If the prejudice be well founded, a frank and full confession of the wrong, will often not only remove it, but deeply affect the hearts of those who

have been its subjects, and give additional power to any further efforts that may be made to benefit them and others. If the prejudice is without proper ground, proper inquiries and explanations, conducted in a right spirit, will generally remove it; and if it fails on the part of a few, it will usually place the prejudiced persons in such a point of light, and exhibit the christian character of its object to such advantage, as will render it comparatively harmless, if it does not furnish an occasion for magnifying the grace and power of God by causing the wrath of man to praise him, and by restraining the remainder.

2. The agencies employed must have confidence in each other, and be united among themselves. Without this, no talents, zeal and efforts can prevail. There must be union and deep sympathy existing between the minister and the church. Peace and unity must also exist in the church, and the members must have mutual confidence in each other. A revival may commence where these do not exist, but it will not be by the conversion of sinners, but it will commence by the repentance confessions of professors; the minister and church must first be revived. Where there is

a want of confidence and union between the minister and the church, or between the individual members of the church, there is but one way to commence an effort for a revival. Let the church come together with their minister, and pray and confess, and confess and pray, until they are themselves revived and in the proper frame of mind to work for God, and then go and talk to sinners and plead with them, and there will be a revival. This is scriptural, for we are commanded to confess our faults one to another.

3. When special efforts are resolved upon, such as cannot be continued through the whole year, the most favorable season should be selected, when most time can be devoted to the work of God, and when there are the least necessary cares and other matters to divert attention. We know that God is able and willing to work at any time, but he proposes to work in the use of human instrumentalities, and it is known to all that men cannot devote an equal amount of effort to the work of God at all seasons; and hence, that season should be selected for special efforts, when most time and effort can be bestowed. If God commences a revival under the ordinary efforts that

are made, we must be ready to enter into it, but still this is a different thing from selecting a time for making special efforts to produce a revival, when there is none in progress. What wise minister or church would select seed time or harvest in a farming community for such an effort? In some sections, on the Delaware and Susquehanna rivers, and some other places, a large portion of the people follow lumbering, and take their lumber down those rivers during the spring freshet, when most of the men are required to leave home. Would it be wise to appoint a protracted effort to commence at the time the spring flood might be expected? Surely not. These illustrations are designed merely to show the importance of discriminating in favor of the most convenient seasons for special efforts; to deny the propriety or necessity of such discrimination, is to say that we are to exercise less practical wisdom in matters of religion than in matters of this world.

4. It may not always be best to summon a council, and after formal deliberations resolve on special efforts, and make formal appointments for commencing such efforts. This may sometimes be the best way, but in other com-

munities, and under other circumstances, it might awaken suspicions on the part of the irreligious portion of community, and give the enemy an advantage, in the work of opposing and counteracting the effort. Wisdom is profitable to direct in each case what course had better be taken. It may be best in some cases for the minister merely to make an appointment of a single evening meeting for an extra lecture, or for a special season of prayer, without intimating any thing beyond. When that meeting has been held, he can judge from the attendance and spirit manifested, whether or not it is best to appoint another. In this way a church may be drawn into a protracted meeting and a revival.

5. Ministers should always be looking for signs of a revival, and ready to improve every favorable symptom which may manifest itself in their congregations. If persons are seen unusually affected under the sermon, make it in your way to speak to them, and do what you can to deepen the good impression made. If an unusual seriousness at any time appears to rest upon the congregation, appoint a class meeting, or an inquiring meeting, and invite all who are desirous or even willing to be con-

versed with to attend. Should there be none to attend, it will do no harm, the members can attend and enjoy a good meeting. But it may be the means of a revival. No doubt ministers and professed christians often overlook the state of things, and suffer a state of seriousness to pass off, when, if a meeting was appointed, as above recommended, they would find themselves at once, in the midst of a revival. Much good preaching is no doubt lost for want of other appropriate exercises and efforts to promote and warm into life the seed sown. It requires deep conviction and much resolution on the part of sinners, to come forward and declare their purpose to seek God, uninvited, and many no doubt who would come forward, if invited at the proper time in a proper manner, for want of such invitation never appear at God's altar; they are often convicted under the ministrations of the word, and go away and lose their serious impressions. Let ministers and leading professors look well to this point, and there will be many revivals where there are but few now.

SECTION VIII.

Directions for the management of Revivals—Revival Preaching.

HAVING treated of the commencement of revivals in the preceding section, in this some directions will be given for their management during their progress. The reader is requested not to lose sight of the remarks which were made at the opening of the last section, on the difficulty of giving such directions as may be applied with general benefit, by the great variety of minds, acting amid the various and ever changing circumstances inseparable from the wide field of revival efforts. Too much must not be expected from rules; rules cannot supply the place of practical good sense, but only assist it, and supply, in a small degree, the lack of experience. As there remarked, rules to be generally useful must be general in their character, embracing only a few leading points. The following are designed to apply to the manner of preaching during a revival while it is in progress.

The preaching should be of a character suit-

ed to the general intellectual condition of the community, and to the state of the work, calculated to produce and assist those mental states and exercises which constitute the essential elements of a revival. The great object of all preaching is to save souls; but within this great object there are several secondary objects to be aimed at, as means to an end. One great object is to teach the people, and enlighten them so as to make them understand the doctrines and duties of Christianity generally. Another object is to persuade individual men to do their duty. It is clear that men are easier to be taught and made to know their duty, than they are to be persuaded to do it; hence, so few who do as well as they know. To persuade them, we may touch every spring that moves the soul; we may present the claims of the law; we may point out the enormity of sin; we may show the depravity of the human heart, and expose its enmity to God and holiness; we may appeal to the law of God, and the suffering and tender compassion of Christ, and seek to rouse the conscience and move the soul by spreading before the mind the terrors of perdition and the glories and joys of heaven.

That it is right to employ all these considerations to move the sinner, is clear from the fact that they are all employed in the Scriptures; God makes use of them all to persuade sinners to repent. The whole truth should be preached, and the whole duty of man should be insisted upon by every minister and by every church, but all cannot be done in a day, nor even during the ordinary continuance of a revival. Hence, the minister, during a revival, should discriminate in favor of those particular truths and duties, which are most immediately connected with the repentance and conversion of sinners, and which are most calculated to produce immediate results. A few illustrations may be of use.

1. Instruction during the progress of a revival should be mainly limited to those points essential to a genuine repentance and the exercise of that faith by which sinners are justified. The nature of repentance, and the nature of faith as the condition of justification or pardon, should be dwelt upon, and made as plain as possible. There are various doctrines of the gospel which are proper to be preached, and which should be preached at other times, which may be profitably omitted

during revivals, for the simple fact that they have no immediate effect on the great object in hand, the conversion of sinners. It may be well at proper seasons to discuss the question of the Sabbath in its various aspects, to dwell upon the order of creation in the six days work of God, the tree of life, and of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the literality of the garden, the nature of the first sin, the history of the patriarchs, the bondage in Egypt, the journey of the Israelites through the wilderness with its incidents, the Mosaic ritual with its types and shadows, the building of the temple, the various prophets with the predictions they uttered, the ministry of John the Baptist, the birth of Christ with its incidents, his temptation, his general life, the appointment of his ministers, their respective characters and labors, the order and discipline of the primitive church, and a thousand other like subjects; we say it may be proper to discuss these subjects at proper times and seasons, but to dwell upon any or all of them during a revival would be unwise and unprofitable. They are not revival subjects; they furnish a field for much useful instruction, but it is not that instruction which is strictly

necessary to, and calculated to produce immediate repentance and faith. Instruction during a revival should be that kind which shows the way to Christ, promotes repentance, and assists faith.

2. Those duties should be mainly insisted upon during a revival, which are necessarily connected with conversion. The whole duty of man is to be preached, but this cannot be done in a day any more than all the doctrinal truth of the gospel can be preached in a day. There is one sense in which the whole duty of man should be insisted upon during a revival with peculiar force. It should be urged that the principle of obedience must exist in the heart, that there must be an entire surrender of the heart to God, in such a submission to the will of God as includes a willingness and purpose to do every duty so far and as fast as it be made known. But this can be done without dwelling upon and explaining every individual duty that may occur during life. The minister of the gospel has a wide field before him to treat of the various associations which make up the combinations of human relations, with all their obligations and duties; these are the standing theme of his

pulpit labors for his whole life, but during the continuance of a special revival, he should mainly confine himself to those duties which are necessarily connected with the conversion of sinners. The duty of immediate repentance, faith, submission to God, and prayer, should constitute the principal themes of revival preaching; while these duties should be urged by all the variety of considerations, which can exert an influence over the human mind. The variety of preaching during a revival, should not be so much a variety of themes as a variety of reasons, motives and illustrations, by which the few points presented are urged and pressed home to the heart and conscience.

3. There should be as little controversial preaching as possible during a revival. We do not mean by this that we are not to preach the truth, defend the truth, attack and oppose error; it should be done, it must be done, but it should be done at proper seasons and in a proper manner, and we do not think a revival is the proper season for controversial preaching. It will, in almost every congregation, awaken a division of feeling, and a contention unfriendly to a revival. There is one excep-

tion to this rule. It concerns those errors which are immediately in the way of the revival. When it is found during the progress of a revival, that portions of the community hold errors which will necessarily prevent their conversion while they hold them, and that they are impeding the progress of the revival, they should be attacked and exposed with a strong hand, but even this should be done in a spirit of kindness and pity. A little tenderness thrown into a good argument, adds great force to the logic, and a few tears will do more towards convincing the errorist, if mingled with sound argument, than many severe controversial blows. But all errors, and matters of difference in opinion, which are not at the time immediately in the way of the conversion of sinners, and which are not impeding the revival, should be left to be discussed and settled at another time, and under other circumstances. The introduction of any subject on which there is a difference of opinion, which difference of opinion is not already in the way of the revival, will injure if not break it up, by producing a division of thought and feeling, and talk, and by diverting attention from the one great object, the imme-

diate conversion of sinners. A sinner whose thoughts are fixed on the state of his own heart, and his sins, who, if his thoughts could be kept there a short time, would repent and submit to God, by the introduction of some controverted point, may have his attention diverted from himself to some speculative point in theology, and lose his convictions. Ministers and professors should be very careful what they say and do that is liable to divert attention and produce division of feeling.

4. The preaching during a revival should all have some specific object in view. The preaching of the truth in general, as too many preach, should be avoided. This has been alluded to under the first and second divisions of this section, but it needs to be viewed as a single point comprehending the entire pulpit efforts during a revival. There are but few points to be presented and urged during a revival, and those are the points which are calculated to keep alive and increase the state of things which constitutes the revival. The minister should have his eye on some one of the following objects in all his pulpit labors during a revival.

(1.) The entire consecration of believers to God; such a consecration as produces an entire fitness for the work of God. This is important, and should be pressed home upon the church.

(2.) The awaking of sinners. To produce conviction of sin, in the mind of the sinner, is the first thing to be done towards saving him. Until this point is gained, all other efforts are necessarily lost. Conviction is of two kinds; that which consists of the conviction of the understanding, a rational conviction, in which the judgment as an intellectual operation decides that the soul has sinned and is guilty before God; and that which consists of emotion or a deep feeling of compunction. It requires both these to constitute evangelical repentance, yet they are not always combined in the same degree; some have a larger share of the rational, and others exhibit more of compunction and emotion. To produce these states, and especially the feeling, should be one distinct object of preaching, during a revival.

(3.) To lead the awakened sinner to Christ is one of the leading objects of preaching during a revival. This is often difficult; much

more so in some cases than others. Much depends upon the religious education persons have received, their peculiar doctrinal notions, and their previous habits of thinking. Some will be found to hold views which are in the way of their taking hold upon Christ by faith; and to attack and overcome these false views without waking up a spirit of controversy is a difficult matter. It can commonly be done most effectually by exhibiting and dwelling upon the opposite truths.

To bring the awakened sinner to Christ, faith must be exhibited in the most plain and simple manner. This may be done by a variety of illustrations borrowed from the varied incidents of christian experience. The more simple the better; it is simplicity that the awakened sinner needs to assist his faith, more than learned disquisitions. This is well illustrated in the following anecdote.

It is said of a distinguished nobleman, that, finding himself wasting away under the influence of disease, he turned his attention to religion. He inquired the condition of salvation, and was told, he must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. But what was faith,—what was it to believe? was the next inquiry.

On this his mind labored. He remembered that one of his farmers was a very zealous, praying man, and he sent for him; and on his coming before him, he asked him what faith was. The plain farmer replied, that it was taking God at his word. This pleased him, but it was so simple that he was afraid to trust to it, and sent for a learned minister to explain the nature of faith to him. He gave him a very labored, sound, and learned exposition of faith. When he had got through, the lord said, "I like the farmer's faith best after all, I prefer to die in his faith."

To bring the awakened sinner to Christ it is necessary to explain and enforce the duty of an entire surrender of the heart to God. God will have the heart. Every sin must be given up, and every duty must be resolved upon. So long as there is an unwillingness to give up any one sin, or to perform any one duty, the soul cannot be converted. There must be an entire surrender. An illustration or two may be useful on this point.

Some years since a revival was in progress in a New-England village, in the Baptist and Methodist churches at the same time. A young lady went forward for prayers in the

Baptist church for many evenings in succession, and obtained no relief, while many others were converted. At last the Baptist minister took her to task, and told her that she had not surrendered all or she would have been blessed ; there was some sin she was unwilling to forsake, some duty that she was not willing to do, or some confession required of her which she was not willing to make. She declared that there was no such thing, unless it was one single word she had once spoken. Said she, "Last winter when there was a revival in the Methodist Church, I was there, and felt powerfully convicted, and when they invited them forward to the altar, I was inclined to go, but did not. Soon they began to pray and were noisy, and I was offended at the noise and left the house, saying I would go to hell rather than get religion in such a noise." "Well," said the Baptist minister, "I am afraid you will go to hell unless you get religion there ; God appears likely to take you at your word. I advise you to go there and make the trial." She went to the Methodist meeting the next evening and was converted. It is not to be presumed that the Methodist altar and Methodist noise, in them-

selves, were essential to her conversion, but only that she had made them so by the rebellion of her heart against the work of God. The heart was not subdued until she was willing to be converted any where, and in the use of any means that God saw fit to own and bless; and until the heart submits to God and makes an entire surrender, the soul cannot be saved.

In one of the Northern towns in the State of New York, a powerful revival was in progress, some fifteen years since. A man of property, living some miles from the village, got powerfully awakened, and came forward for prayers for a number of evenings, and got no relief. He was in great distress, and on the last evening cried out in his anguish, not knowing what he said, "O Lord, give me a month to get rid of my horses." The truth flashed in an instant upon the minds of those who were near him and heard what he said. The case was, he had been a horse racer, and at the time owned two valuable race horses. When he approached God, horse racing was presented as an evil which he must abandon, and conversion under such circumstances would depreciate the value of his horses upon

his hands. This was the sacrifice he felt most unwilling to make, and hence the struggle in his mind, and hence that ejaculation, "Give me a month to get rid of my horses." Those around him explained to him that he must give up all, and he made a full surrender and received the blessing.

The writer was once engaged in a revival on his own charge, and an Innkeeper, a Rumseller, presented himself at the altar for prayers. He was powerfully awakened; and could he have been converted without giving up rum-selling, he would probably have been converted; but as it was, after struggling for a week, he gave it up and went back. It is not meant by this that no rumseller ever was converted, but with the light and means of information which he enjoyed, it was not possible that he could submit to God, believe and trust in Christ, without abandoning the practice of rumselling.

Every sermon during a revival, should bear more or less on this point, impressing upon the mind of the awakened sinner the nature and absolute necessity of entire submission to God. To impress the mind with the true nature of submission, it should be made plain

and distinct that it is the heart that God claims; it is not our farms, not our money, not our pleasures, but ourselves. The reason why we cannot be saved while we cling to any one thing which God interdicts, is because that one thing, however trifling it may be in itself, controls our hearts, and keeps us from God; however small the object may be, it intervenes between the heart and God. So long as we keep back the smallest thing, that thing will hold the heart back. God will have the heart; he will accept of nothing in place of it; all things else would be rejected without the heart. This is well illustrated in the following fact:

A minister was preaching, in the West, on the death of Christ for sinners. When he had closed his remarks, a poor Indian rose, and advancing near the minister, inquired if Jesus died for him, for poor Indian. The minister told him he did, and was able and willing to save him. "Well," said the Indian, with tears in his eyes, "me got no land to give Jesus, white man got all Indian's land away, but me give Jesus my dog and my rifle." The minister informed him that Jesus could not accept such gifts. The son of the forest added,

"me give my rifle, my dog and my blanket; Indian got nothing more, me give Jesus all." The minister again informed him that Jesus could not accept such gifts. The Indian bowed his head in sorrow, but after a moment's reflection he raised himself up, and fixing his eye on the minister, said in a subdued tone, "Here is poor Indian, will Jesus have him?" That was the offering which Jesus could accept, and in that moment the Spirit did its work, and he who had been so poor, felt the witness within that he was heir to an inheritance.

The above points are the leading objects of all the preaching during a revival, and that they may be distinctly understood, we repeat them. They are first, to produce, on the part of professors, an entire consecration to God and his work; secondly, to produce conviction on the part of sinners, causing them to see, and feel, and confess their sins; and, thirdly, to lead the awakened sinner to Christ, making an entire surrender of his heart, and trusting in the atonement through faith for salvation. These points may be presented in various forms, and made plain by the use of a great variety of facts and illustrations. In-

deed, a variety should be kept up during a revival, by elaborating them, and presenting them in a variety of aspects, and with various illustrations, rather than by wandering from them to other subjects, whereby the sinner's mind may be diverted from the one point upon which it must be fixed and kept to produce conversion.

SECTION IX.

Directions for managing revivals. Government, prayer and singing.

THE writer has no disposition to deny or overlook the fact that revivals have often been badly managed, or not managed at all, and have sometimes degenerated into wild fanaticism and hurtful errors. There is a liability to this always with a certain class of minds, and it must be guarded against by those who are capable of appreciating the danger. The following extract from Mr. Wesley shows that there were evils to be guarded against in his day. The extract is from a letter written by Mr. Wesley to Adam Clarke, at a time when he was engaged in a revival, dated September 9, 1790.

“In the great revival in London, my first difficulty was to bring into temper those who opposed the work; and my next, to check and regulate the extravagances of those that promoted it. And this was far the hardest part of the work; for many of them would bear no check at all. But I followed one rule,

though with all calmness: 'You must either bend or break.' Meantime, while you act exactly right, expect to be blamed by both sides. I will give you a few directions. 1. See that no prayer meeting continues later than nine at night, particularly on Sunday. Let the house be emptied before the clock strikes nine. 2. Let there be no exhortation at any prayer meeting. 3. Beware of jealousy, or judging one another. 4. Never think a man is an enemy to the work because he reproves irregularities."

We have not quoted the above because we believe all that Mr. Wesley says adapted to our age and country; we think it would not do strictly to enforce his rules among us, though they may have been the best in his time and in his hands. Our object in giving the extract is to show that there were difficulties connected with revivals in Mr. Wesley's day, and that irregularities, or extravagances, were among the evils most difficult to manage and counteract. We have known like difficulties in our own times in this country, and have seen revivals destroyed by a wild and unmanageable spirit that got in among the people, and have known churches ruined by it.

We have seen this among other denominations as well as among Methodists. It would be of no use to spread the particulars of these disasters to religion upon our page; our object is to give a few directions which may assist in conducting revivals to a happier result.

1. A revival meeting, like every other meeting, must have a head. Some person must be known as the presiding officer of the meeting, whose right and duty it is to preserve order, and give all necessary directions. Such leader should be the officiating minister when he is present, and some deacon or class leader when there is no minister present. Such leader or presiding officer being acknowledged, his directions must be respected and obeyed. It is difficult for erring men to act in sufficient concert, unless they do it through some common oracle. If one be at liberty to propose prayers, another exhortation, another singing, and a fourth that the meeting be closed, and a fifth that it be continued longer, confusion and defeat will be the consequence.

2. Order and decorum must be preserved. What these are is perhaps difficult to define, they are so much a matter of taste. In many particulars, Episcopalian decorum is one thing,

Presbyterian decorum another, and Methodist decorum another. There are, however, certain Scriptural bounds within which all should keep; but within these Scriptural limits there is room for much variety; to a certain extent, therefore, decorum and order are matters of taste. We have seen souls converted amid noise and apparent confusion, and we have seen them converted where solemn silence reigned, save the single voice of him who was mouth in prayer. The confusion is only with men, not with God; at the hour of worship, there are prayers sent up from ten thousand altars in different places at the same moment, with the belief that God can hear and answer them all; and surely the distance that men are from each other when they pray, can make no difference with God. The confusion, then, is only with men; God could hear and answer a hundred prayers offered in the same place at the same time. These remarks are not made to justify several praying vocally at the same time; as a general practice, we do not approve of any such thing, but our design is merely to show that hearty responses in time of prayer, and even several voices engaged in prayer at the same time, cannot prevent God

from hearing them, if each be offered in faith, or invalidate the work of conversion which may be supposed to take place amid such a state of things. Much depends upon education and habit; many could not pray or retain their devotional feelings, where some others would be in their religious element and feel a peculiar sense of the divine presence; we should therefore manage these difficulties with charity and tenderness. He who has the charge of a revival should never lose sight of the education, intelligence, habits, and temperament of the people whom he has to manage, and while he should insist on the life and power of faith and prayer, and a proper animation in devotion, he should guard against all irregularities with a gentle hand, and yet stand as a wall of brass across the path which leads to those licentious and ruinous practices which have sometimes resulted from unrestrained wildfire. The fact cannot be too strongly impressed upon the minds of all, that what would be the most prudent course, and what would give the greatest efficiency to a revival in one community, would check it if not stop it in another, in consequence of the different views, feelings and weaknesses com-

mon to poor humanity. If tares must be removed, let it be done in a manner to injure the wheat as little as possible; but let it not be forgotten that some are to be suffered to remain until the harvest, lest the wheat be destroyed in plucking them up.

Those irregularities which are most likely to transpire during a revival, can be most effectually opposed and guarded against when there is no special religious excitement pervading the congregation, inasmuch as proper views of order and decorum, if expressed and urged, will not then come in immediate contact with the practice and excited feelings of those who most need such lessons. If ministers and leaders in the church would administer sufficient instruction on the subject when there is no special excitement, so as to produce correct views and right feelings, it would be comparatively easy to preserve order under the influence of a revival.

3. Singing during a revival is an important part of religious exercise. Words should be well selected so as to meet the feelings of the congregation; or so as to be suited to the case of awakened sinners. An appropriate verse, well sung, at the right time, will sometimes

do more to assist the struggling spirit to take hold on Christ by faith, than a long sermon or a long prayer. The words may be a prayer clothed in the charms of music, so that while they have all the power with God that any prayer can have, it reacts on our own hearts with a redoubled influence. Suppose an awakened sinner to be near the point of believing and receiving Christ, at the close of an appropriate prayer, who can tell the influence it may have to join in singing the following verse :

“ Come, Lord, the drooping sinner cheer,
Nor let thy chariot wheels delay;
Appear, in my poor heart appear!
My God, my Savior, come away !”

Or the following :

“ Yet save a trembling sinner, Lord,
Whose hope, still hov’ring round thy word,
Would light on some sweet promise there,
Some sure support against despair.”

Such words are always to be preferred to the light ditties which are too frequently sung on such occasions.

Though frequent singing may be useful, long singing by all means should be avoided ; it cannot fail to be hurtful. From one to four verses is all that should be sung at a time in revival meetings.

4. Prayer forms the most important of all

parts of revival exercises. There are several points of light in which we may view the subject of prayer.

First, there should be constant and earnest prayer on the part of all interested in the revival. "Men ought always to pray and not to faint," yet during a revival, they should pray more than usual; there should be more secret prayer, more social prayer, more public prayer, and more earnest prayer. This will give weight and power to all the other exercises. When a whole church are really united in earnest prayer to God, the minister, if he be God's minister, will appear clothed with an unusual power, and his words will be life and spirit.

Secondly, all the public prayers during a revival, should be short and appropriate. Long seasons of prayer should be avoided; there should not be more than two or three prayers offered in succession, and they should be short and to the point. In praying for those who may have presented themselves for the benefit of prayers, their case should be presented directly and specifically before the throne. Nothing can appear more inappropriate than to offer a general and diffusive prayer at an

altar, around which spirits are bowed, crying for mercy, and struggling for immediate deliverance. It may be well to pray for our whole land and nation, that each minister may be blessed, that each church may be enlarged, that the corrupt and corrupting streams of intemperance and licentiousness may be dried up, and that slavery and every form of oppression may be overthrown; it may be well also to pray for the nations of the earth, that the Indias may be blessed, that Ethiopia may stretch out her hands to God, that the North may give up and the South keep not back, that Christ may have the heathen for his inheritance and the earth for his possession; we say it may be well to pray for all these things and many more, but not at the time and place where awakened sinners have presented themselves for prayers; then should our prayers respect their case in particular, and when we have prayed all we have to urge at the throne of grace for their conversion, we should close and let another pray. When we invite sinners forward for prayers, it is that we may pray for them, and not that we may pray for the conversion of Africa and the Indias; we can pray for these lands with-

out inviting sinners forward. It must have a bad influence on the mind of a deeply anxious sinner, who has presented himself for prayers, at our request, to hear us pray round the world, and for everything else rather than his conversion.

5. Visiting, and religious conversation, may be rendered an efficient means of promoting a revival. This is an important portion of the regular pastoral labors of a minister, which should be neglected at no time, but we speak of a more general work now as a means of carrying on a revival. At such a time the work should not be left wholly to the regular minister; he cannot attend to it amid all his other extra efforts. Let some other ministers, deacons or class leaders, or any judicious Christians engaged in the work, go from house to house, and converse and pray with every family. In this way many will be reached who would otherwise escape the influence of all the public exercises.

The above rules embrace all the important points in relation to the management of revivals, and their amplification and application, under the various circumstances that may arise, must be left to the good sense of those engaged in the work.

SECTION X.

The course to be pursued at and after the close of a revival.

FROM the very nature of a revival it must come to a close. One essential element of a revival is the conversion of many persons at the same time, or in rapid succession, and this operation cannot continue long, as all within its influence would soon be converted, and it would cease, as fire goes out when the fuel is consumed. It is usually the case, however, that revivals close from other influences, but as all revivals must and do close from some influence, it is proper to contemplate the state of things which must attend such close, and to point out the proper course to be pursued. Assuming, on the basis of what has been said in the preceding sections, that revivals are the genuine offspring of Christianity, and truly promote the work of God, no one will deny that their close furnishes a solemn subject for contemplation. The number that have been converted and have turned from sin to holiness, and from the way that leads to destruction

to the path that leads to life, is a matter of serious thought. But the number that have withstood the influence of the revival, and are still in their sins and in the way to death, is a more solemn subject of contemplation. Their chances are far less for salvation ; they have added to their guilt and hardness of heart ; and as they have not yielded under the influence of the revival, they are less likely to yield and be converted when there is no revival ; and their chance to live to pass through another revival are not flattering ; and should they live to see another, as they have resisted the influence of one they may, yea, are more likely to resist the influence of another. Such are some of the reflections which the close of a revival is calculated to inspire. But the object of this closing section of our little volume, is more particularly to note a few useful rules to be observed.

1. A revival should never be prematurely closed by discontinuing the necessary efforts to keep it alive. Though a revival must close, yet we should keep it in operation as long as possible, and cease our extra revival efforts, only when souls cease to be converted.
2. It is important to know when a reviva

is closed, and then, and not till then, cease such extra efforts as have special reference to the immediate awakening and conversion of sinners. To attempt to force forward a revival by extra efforts, after the convicting and converting power of the Divine Spirit has ceased its work, will not only be a waste of time and strength, but may do harm in other respects.

3. It is not best to suspend extra efforts too suddenly; such a course may produce too great a shock in the minds of young converts, and especially in the minds of those who have but little Christian knowledge, and who have never been constant attendants on public worship before the revival. Having been drawn in by the influence of the revival, and having attended worship every day or evening for a week or two, this being the whole of their Christian experience, to throw them suddenly out of their new element for a whole week, may have an unfavorable influence. This remark may have some force in relation to all young converts, but it is not so much designed for those who have enjoyed a thorough religious education, as for those who have been suddenly gathered from the lanes and

hedges by the influence of the revival. Such need tender care, and should be eased off from the extra efforts under the influence of which they have been converted as gently as possible. For this purpose frequent conference or class meetings should be held, and they be frequently and freely conversed with and encouraged.

4. In closing a revival, much depends upon the manner in which the officiating minister discharges his duties in the pulpit. If he let himself down at once from the high toned, heart searching preaching adapted to a revival, to a cold, abstract, philosophical style of preaching, the transition will be so great as to produce unfavorable effects upon the minds of the congregation, especially the young converts. The warmth should be kept up, while the preacher should gently glide off from those subjects which were designed to promote the conversion of sinners, to such subjects as are calculated to instruct, strengthen, and promote a growth of grace.

5. Pastoral visiting should be kept up after a revival, with zeal and fidelity. Much depends upon this ; for want of it many converts have been lost. Let the minister, assist-

ed by experienced members of the church, call frequently upon the converts, and converse freely and faithfully with them, instruct and pray with them, and there will be less complaining of the apostacy of revival converts.

There are a few difficulties in the way of carrying out these views which it may be well to notice. The first is, the exhausted state of the principal laborers in a revival, and the increased demands for their attention in other directions, in consequence of the extra time and labor devoted to the revival. Those who have passed through the labors of a revival, feel the necessity of rest, and are under peculiar temptation to be less active than at other times. A second difficulty, among Methodists, is inseparable from the operation of their itinerant system. Those who travel circuits are apt to neglect some portion of their field of labor while they are laboring in a revival in a given place, and when the revival is over, they will feel constrained to pay more attention to those neglected parts. This often leaves the scene of the revival with less than usual attention immediately after its close, whereas it needs more. Again, the removal of ministers from one charge to another, in

accordance with the itinerant system, will often bring the removal of a minister during or soon after a revival. Time is lost in the change, and the work is left for a time unsupplied; and when the new minister comes, he is a stranger, knows but little of the state of things, does not know the converts from others, and perhaps before he finds them out, and gets into their sympathies, they are backslidden. These difficulties constitute one of the strongest objections that can be urged against the itinerant system; but great as they are, in the opinion of the writer, they cannot counterbalance its advantages. They need occur only occasionally, and then may be counteracted in part, at least, by care and management.

We have reached the end of our little volume, and have only to add a prayer that it may be rendered a blessing to those who shall read it, and that revivals may be increased until the knowledge of salvation shall fill the world, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of God. Amen.

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